

18 February 2019

**Dear Fellow Athletes,**

Thank you for taking the time to join the IPC Athletes' Council's (AC) first ever Global call for Paralympic athlete representatives. Our main focus was the recent decision made by the IPC Governing Board (GB) regarding the Russian Paralympic Committee (RPC) membership status.

Fifty-six athlete representatives from various International Federations, Regional Organisations and National Paralympic Committees registered for the call. Out of the registered athlete representatives, 49 joined the call. The call highlighted the importance of a two-way communication between the IPC AC and the athlete representatives, also informed attendees that this was the first time to have this global athlete conference call and similar engagements would be conducted in the future to proactively open up dialogue after IPC GB meetings or IPC AC meetings.

**Updates were provided on the following:**

#### **The IPC AC Strategic Plan**

- The IPC AC strategic plan was approved by the GB at its January 2019 meeting and would be launched in the coming weeks.
- This plan has been in the works for the past two years and included consultation with athlete representatives both at the inaugural IPC Athletes Forum in 2017 and throughout the process. We've listened closely to the interests and needs of the athlete community and are really looking forward to sharing our plan publicly and implementing it over the coming years.

#### **The second IPC Athletes Forum:**

- The second IPC Athletes Forum will be held in November 2019.
- We are currently finalising the details so please stay tuned for an announcement and registration details which will be shared in the coming weeks.

#### **Lifting of suspension of RPC:**

International Paralympic Committee

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IPC President, Andrew Parsons, and IPC Chief Communications and Marketing Officer, Craig Spence, joined the call to give an overview of the GB's decision regarding the RPC's membership status following their 29 month long suspension which started in the summer of 2016.

**Andrew provided an update on the following:**

- RPC's suspension background information
- Measures taken by the RPC to meet 69 of the 70 reinstatement criteria
- Discussions by the Board before deciding to conditionally lift the suspension
- Post reinstatement conditions. The full press release regarding this decision can be found at the link below:

<https://www.paralympic.org/news/ipc-lift-russia-suspension>

**Conference Call Outcomes/Main discussions**

1. RPC suspension will be lifted conditionally by 15 March 2019.
2. The IPC is disappointed that the Russian Federation has not publicly acknowledged the McLaren Report which was one of the original criteria set in 2016.
3. The Board concluded that the Russian Federation is unlikely to ever accept the Report, a move that will maintain the RPC's suspension indefinitely, and prohibit it from entering athletes into IPC sanctioned competitions.
4. After 29 months under suspension and having fulfilled 69 of the 70 pre-set criteria, the decision to lift the suspension under strict conditions was not an easy one to make.
5. Through December 2018 and January 2019, the IPC AC reached out to athlete representatives from around the world to gather their feedback to ensure that the Chairperson brought a well-rounded voice to the GB table for discussion. Many athletes commended the IPC for their strong stance over the past 29 months and expressed their frustration that the McLaren report had still not been acknowledged. Many athlete representatives expressed their hesitancy to move forward unless the IPC could put metrics in place that could monitor the organisation and ensure that Russian para-athletes were truly competing clean.
6. The IPC stressed that if all the 70 criteria had been met, it would have lifted the suspension unconditionally.
7. By not accepting the McLaren Report, the conditional lifting of the suspension means the IPC will continue to closely monitor the RPC from now until 31 December 2022 (through Tokyo 2020 and Beijing 2022). This means that during this period, the IPC can reconvene



and determine whether the suspension needs to be brought back into place if any of the post-reinstatement conditions are not met.

8. To ensure transparency, we will share updates with Paralympic athlete representatives that can be shared with their respective athlete communities as they are received.

### **Impact on World Para Sport International Federations:**

The World Para Sports (WPS) only learnt of the decision to lift the suspension at the same time as the rest of the world when the announcement was made public. Since the announcement, the IPC Anti-Doping team is working with each World Para Sport to determine conditions. The conditions will be shared in a transparent manner and published on all the IPC communication platforms and the respective sports communities. The IPC will encourage all WPS to ensure that their respective athlete representatives are included in this discussion and dialogue.

9. The sport specific post-reinstatement conditions will be announced by the 15th of March latest.
10. The IPC AC will also communicate the same to the athletes through the Facebook Para-Athlete Club page as well as through email direct to the athlete representatives whose contacts we have.
11. Once the conditions have been published, Russian Para athletes will be allowed to compete in all WPS competitions and IPC sanctioned competitions.
12. The IPC will determine the anti-doping testing programme for athletes competing at IPC competitions, including the Paralympic Games. It was noted that one of the conditions will be that Russian Para athletes have to undergo a certain number of tests in the months prior to each competition. The number of tests will be sport-specific. It was also noted that the Russian Para athletes will be tested more than any other athletes in the Paralympic Movement.
13. Each WPS will inform the IPC of classification opportunities in their respective sports.
14. Understanding that capacity to re-classify and timelines for events is tight, there may need to be some flexibility to accommodate however assurance was given that Russian para-athletes will not become priority over all other athletes who require classification/re-classification.
15. RUSADA is now conditionally compliant with WADA and will be testing athletes, the IPC will complement these tests and are currently developing the testing criteria which athletes should meet before they can compete in IPC competitions.



16. Each WPS will determine the anti-doping programme for athletes competing at their competitions.
17. RPC currently has one of the best anti-doping programmes in the world.
18. It is the belief of the IPC that RPC will meet the conditions that are set.
19. Should an RPC athlete receive an Anti-Doping Rule Violation, this will be dealt with in line with the WADA Code and IPC Anti-Doping Code. If it is found that there is a systematic doping situation as it previously was, then the IPC would deal with it differently and have the right to suspend the RPC again.

The original 70 criteria that the RPC were given in July 2016 can be found here:

[https://www.paralympic.org/sites/default/files/document/161121134559873\\_2016\\_11\\_21+RPC+reinstatement+criteria.pdf](https://www.paralympic.org/sites/default/files/document/161121134559873_2016_11_21+RPC+reinstatement+criteria.pdf)

If you have any suggestions or ways we can improve on the logistics or execution of the global calls with athlete representatives, please feel free to reach out to us at anytime. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at [athletecouncil@paralympic.org](mailto:athletecouncil@paralympic.org).

Thank you and kind regards,

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Chairperson, IPC Athletes' Council